

THE HOUGH LETTERS

1857-1862

Copies of letters written by Sylvanus Hough from Lafayette to his son, Orlando, in Ohio advising him on coming with his mother to join Sylvanus in Lafayette, 1861.

Transcripts of letters of his marriage proposal from Orlando Hough and Emmalene Bassett before they came to Lafayette, 1857-1861.

Transcripts of letters written by Orlando Hough of Lafayette and Emmalene Bassett of Gowanda, New York., 1862.

Donor Robert Hough, Orinda, 1978
Great grandson of Orlando Hough.

HOUGH FAMILY

Robert Hough, 133 Meadow Lane, Orinda, California

Sylvanus Hough(father of Orlando),great great grandfather.

Orlando Hough, great grandfather.

Frank Hough(son of Orlando), grandfather.

Harold Hough, father of Robert.

Carrie Hough Van Meter, great aunt, (daughter of Orlando).

Hausman's Ranch March 24 1861

My Dear Sam

I received your letter of Feb 3 last week
the first - that I have received from you
you say you feel sick and have gone to work
in a saw mill before you have got your
strength with I am very sorry to hear

you surely can not gain any thing by work-
ing when you are not well you will probably lose
by it - make your self sick again, and a relapse
might prove fatal you surely should try and get
labor at some lighter work, you say also that you
lost money by Henry though you should be careful
how you let your money go to men that are not
responsible but as it is by my family ^{and} ~~your~~ ^{we} ~~checked~~ I

will repaid it to you be fore long
you want me to give any advice about coming to Cal -
I surely shall never give any advice to you or any
other - young man to come to California unless they
will take it after they get here, there is thousands of
young men in this state that have been here from
two to ten years that can not get means to
get to the ^{states} Atlantic and many will
if you or any other young man come to California
you must not think of getting rich in short space
of time it is slow and sure that wins the race in
California as well as in England

if you think of going to the gold mines you
had better stay at home and work for \$10. per month
you will be better off ten years from now
on the other hand if you would ^{be} satisfied to work on
a Rancho for 25 or 30 Dollars per month and be faithful
attend to your business in the course of a few years
you would be well off. young men are very careless
have that will stick to one place any length of time
if they will work 3 or 4 months get their money run
around till it is all spent and then go to work for
3 or 4 months again

I have been thinking of plan for us to go see if I can
bring things around to my mind that is for you
and your mother to stay where you are until next
January and get all you can to gether and what money
you lack to get heir with I will send you

and for me to stay where I am until you and
your mother get heir and get all I can to gether
and then to take what money there is left and buy
cows and things to keep house with. I have now
\$750. in money and am giving 50 Dollars per month from
my labor and interest on my money I shall have to
send you and your mother to get heir with \$200. or
250 Dollars, to get a place to live and things to keep
house with say 2 or 300. hundred Dollars and a horse, a
time to ride say 60. dollars say all to gether \$500.
if I have my health until then I shall be up \$400.
more with which would leave me \$650 to buy cows
with which would buy at the present prices 30. cows

Thirty cows would be all we could take of
for you 5 months in a year then you could
do something else if you wanted to at any rate
I think we could manage to get along some
how with out being slaves to other people
if you and your mother think that this plan
will work I will join to it with all my heart
if you and your mother ^{think} that I had better come
back to Kentucky I will do that when I get a little more
money but I never shall advise you to come to
California without your mother and my self we hear
for I do not think you will do as well here
with us as you would with us you want
it I have to go to and we want you where we are
I will not say any thing more about it until I hear
from you

California is all summer and no winter - I have
not seen one flake of snow since I have been
in this state There is but very little snow
falls here we have about 6 months drought in
the year - and very little ^{none} the other 6 months
we commence ploughing in Rice and Pines in
March any time within the above mentioned time
will answer to put in crops
my business is now seeing round ranch and riding
after cattle I am the most of the time in the
saddle it will take 2 good horses to stand the
riding that I shall have to do the next 3 months

I must close. Tell these things over with
your mother and ^{do} as you thing best
I shal write to you again. I hope you will
Recieve this so as to have it on the road.
I want you to write to me as soon as you
Recieve this and let me know how you get along
I like your letters to } your further
Lafayette.

Antacosta Co. N. H. H. H. H.
Cal

Houston's Ranch May 14 1861

My Dear Sam

I received your letter of April this day
and am very glad to hear you are well.

I received your letter of last winter, and
answered it, also one from your mother at the
same time, my health is very good this summer
and has been since I have been in California,
altho my health is good I am not able to take
hold of hard work, I could not get ^{the} fine labor
for all the hard work I could do in a month
but you can not I have to earn my money

you want to know what I think
about your coming to California if you
want to come here to settle down for life
I think it would be a good place to live
it is very healthy here I have not ^{only} none of
the dying since I have been here ^{the} previously one of
them was shot for horse stealing one in yard & ^{the} ^{the}
three murdered one poisoned one by the visitation
of God one fell from a load of grain, you will
be here is ^{only} one in seven died of natural death
here with about an average in this State

I do not know what to say to about com-
ing to Cal at this time the fair on the Steamer
now is \$1.55; it would cost 15 cent on the dollar
to give the money to you at this time

with ^{most} money \$212, other expenses would bring
it up to ~~the~~ 240 dollars with it would make
as much as you could have in one year.
here I should like to have you come to Calapa,
think you had better wait until things are a
little more settled at any rate you better
wait until next fall if your mother comes
you will wait and come with her. if she
does not come I shall not stay here more than
than one year more. if she does come I want
some way of living besides working by the
month, I have made up little over \$500
eight hundred dollars since I have been here
and am making about \$50 per month now.
you write something about oil digging
I should like to hear something more
about it. I have no more time to
write today. let me hear from you
often.
yours S. G. S. H. H. H.

Direct your letters to
Lafayette
Contra Costa Co
Cal
11

April the 14 1857

My dear honard frende

I am glad to improve this oportunity in riting
afew lines toyou to let you know how and where
I am and what I am adoining

I amt adoining thing _____

I have ben under the doctors hands now 16 weaks with
the cidny complaint. but I think I am giting litle
beter now I have worked all winter in a sawmill from
dalight til nine oclock. if you know any thing the
folks _____ on the flats I want you to in forme

me what they are all at over on the flats

I have giten to or ~~the~~ leters to them_ and havnt hird
from them yet. I hope few lines will find you all well

I shuld like to se you all very much

I am in so mutch misrey that I cant rite mutch to
you to day

so God by untill I see you again

rite soon and let me know how you are giting alolmy

Direct your letter to Kent county

Grand Rapids

Michigan

this foon Henry gugles

yours respectfully

orlandehuff

(FIRST LETTER - ORLANDO TO EM)
VERY FAINT - HARD TO DECIPHER

Golden June 9th 1861

Miss Emma

(Second letter
orlando to Em
great improvement
spelling & grammar)

Most respected Friend

I hope you will excuse me for the liberty I take in writing to you. But as distance intervenes between us I have no other means of conveying my scattered thoughts, except through the medium of my pen. Mr. Dart and me enjoyed ourselves as well as could be expected considering it was on the seventh day of the week when we left Dayton. When about two thirds of the way on our journey we were overtaken by a violent rain storm, as there was no public House within three miles of us we took possession of a Barn and converted its contents thereof to our special benefit. We retained peaceable possession until we left. There was no lives lost or blood spilled in the whole fracas. I have been some-what lonesome since I left Dayton, and have thought strongly of returning, but business will not permit. Therefore I shall have to enjoy my self according to circumstances (or rather content my self). If you only knew how still it is in the sanctuary where I am writing you would not wonder at such good writing. The children (less than 40 in number) are amusing themselves with each others noise. Therefore I console myself with the old adage that patience is a virtue and industry must prosper. As I leave for Patchen this afternoon I must close. I shall be most happy to hear from you (should this epistle meet your approbation) immediately on the receipt of this. I think the above hint about the children is a sufficient excuse for my good writing spelling and grammar.

Most respectfully Yours —

O. S. Hough

Golden Erie Co. NY

Miss E L Bassett

Dayton Aug. 20, 1861

Friend Orlando,

Doubtless ere this you have come to the conclusion that your letter was unwelcomely received by me, or not at all: but I hope this may convince you contrary. I received your letter & perused it with much pleasure; and wrote a long letter in reply to it - and have wondered why you did not answer it: until last evening; I was writing and among my envelopes I found one which I blotted - where I wrote, and I directed it through mistake to Alden instead of Golden: desiring to remove all doubts & fears I take an early opportunity to rectify the mistake - (if you will pardon me) and consider it "an error of the head & not of the heart." In my other letter I wrote all the news of the day, but since then there has been some new occurrences worthy of note. Emma & Augusta Markham are married to brothers names Remington. H. Prosser was married one day this week to a Miss Draper in Randolph. Mr Dart's folks have gone to Ohio - they are not expected to return very soon: - we miss them very much. I have come early this morning to the school house in hopes of being favored with silence for a few moments but in vain - as I write my scholars come in by the dozen - & the interruption prevents my writing any more this morning. It is now noon and again I resume my writing. I am yet engaged in teaching-my school prospers finely. I have quite a large school which furnishes me enough to do, to keep me out of mischief. If you will come out here I'll tell you more news than I can write in a week - we missed you very much here, after you left: there will be a camp meeting held at Markham's - commencing Aug 29th: And we should be very glad to have you attend: I heard Julia wishing you would come. I shall be obliged to close - this ill-composed & poorly written letter - by requesting you to answer very soon.

From a friend.

E. L. Bassett

Dayton

Golden

Aug 30th/61

Dear friend Emma

I received yours of the 22nd out yesterday and hasten to reply as you will see by the above date. I exceedingly regret at my not being able to attend the Camp meeting of which you spoke. For I am sure that I could enjoy myself very much, with my friends in that vicinity especially the one whom I am at present addressing.

You say you wondered why I did not answer your letter written some time ago. I also wondered what had become of my letter whether received & rejected or whether it had been miscarried, were my conjectures.

The latter supposition however being the least

I am present living in the Town of Golden, a place noted for its beautiful scenery such as its towering & lofty hill-tops & green flowery valleys, (rather more hills than valleys though)

The productions of this most prosperous & glorious Town is Leeks & black Berries. The latter is highly prized by the natives as an extra & rare treat for visitors.

The former is noted for its capability of purifying the breath and making the consumer of it agreeable in company. Now you would naturally suppose that one could not help but take comfort amidst such luxuries.

But alas how verily does the time pass

If I were to be confined in this Town for six months I don't believe I should live more than an hundred years or such a matter. I should judge that the times must necessarily be lively up in Dayton according to your record of marriages in that vicinity. I must acknowledge my surprise at hearing of the marriage of those Markham Giles (I might have properly said Infants) if it were for their being considered old folks now.

You spoke about your students interrupting you while writing. I know how to sympathize with you although you may excel these in number their abilities must certainly be inferior to these for making a noise for I surely hear myself think and were I to close my eyes and imagine myself down south I should think that the Armies were engaged in severe conflict.

It is time that I should close this epistle for I fear that your patience will be sorely tried before you have perused it half through. It doubtful for me to tell at present when I shall be able to visit Dayton. It may be some weeks before I can enjoy that pleasure. I hope you will not criticise these times closely, if you do please excuse the many mistakes & write soon.

Most respectfully yours Friend

Orlando

Letter 4 1861
Schenck

Gowanda Sept 29, 1861

Dear Friend,

As opportunity presents itself I very cheerfully improve the same in addressing a few lines to a much respected friend. I received your very welcome and interesting letter the 25th of September, the day that I came home. I was happy to hear of your safe arrival home, and that you was so highly favored with interesting company on your journey from Dayton to Gowanda: the said Dutchman called at our house and unfortunately for me I was not at home: I was diverted with the account our folks gave me of his call: he inquired very particularly for me - but stated the object of his call or rather excuse was to sell some shoes - but he considered it his especial duty to inform my folks that I was about to marry, "that curly headed driver", (that we went with, to the War Meeting - rather the one, which we did not go with) and that he was a very bad man Probably he gave a true history of the man, but in regard to me he exaggerated some; I think. I have not seen M. E. since you was here: I heard that he was in Town the first day of the Fair. But I was at home, and consequently did not see him: In regard to the arrangement which you made for my convenience (in case you was not here, I will merely say - I should have appreciated more: a boat, with a skillful and more reliable pilot.

We have had a great flood here - it commenced raining thursday night - it continued raining all night, and the next day: raising the Cattaraugus Creek and smaller streams to such a height that it mad great destruction here: it carried the bridge over the creek: down stream and it landed nearly oposite the School House: it also carried away most all of the buildings on the creek. Barker's Hotel was in great danger: it washed away the bank within a few feet of the house. We have not heard the extent of the damage done: - not even in this place as there has been no means of conveying across the creek, news or persons intil today, they have a small boat which by the aid of a rope suspended across the creek they succed in crossing. I believe they intend to build a temporary bridge soon as possible. I have been to Church today heard Ross C. Lord preach a sermon on the late calamity which has befall this place: he said that he was confident in the belief that this flood was sent upon the people here because they disregarded thursday; the day appointed for fasting and prayer. there must be floods elsewhere- I wonder what is the cause: if the people is as wicked every where as in Gowanda: out enough of this I regreted that you was not permitted to at the fair- I shall be happy to see you here at any time: if you regard this worthy of an answer, please answer it.

E. L. Bassett.

"Don't send me any more 16 Stamps" if you do I'll not
not write any more letters to you. Em

Golden Dec 19th / 61

Dear Emiline

Doubtless ere this you have thought that I had forgotten my promise to write. Although not as yet in New York City or upon the broad Atlantic as I had expected when I last saw you. As it is now past the time for starting this month I shall not leave here until the 28th of this month or N. Y. City the first of Jan. I arrived in Golden the next day after I was at your School & it was really amusing to see the astonished visages which I chanced to meet in the streets as they had heard that I had been sent after by some of the military Officers & was on my way to Washington. I did not get that likeness of yours that you promised me. And in asking for your likeness allow me also to ask you for the original, or in other words will you be mine. Should this proposal meet with your approbation I should be most happy to hear from you immediately. All letters sent to my address between this and the 28th of this month will probably reach me my departure on the above date is as yet very uncertain. I hope Emma that you will excuse this ill composed and poorly written letter as I have necessarily had to write in a hurry as the lines themselves will indicate

Most respectfully & truly Yours

O. S. Hough

Marriage
Proposal

Gowanda, Dec. 22/61

Dear Sir,

I acknowledge the reception of your very kind and welcome letter. I become rather impatient in waiting to hear from you: - but was glad to learn that you had not gone to C- I feared that you had become so absorbed in thoughts of your anticipated journey, that you had quite forgotten that of less import, (your friend E.) O- did you leave my school in disgust that day? I should not blame you if you had. I was very much annoyed at the conduct of those girls. I should have been very severe with them, if it had not been the first offence - it was unexpected and unlooked for; therefore I was not prepared for the attack; they become very civil after you left - I was so provoked at their actions that I made up my mind I would give them what they deserved: - I thought I would put it off until the next day: I then called them out & talked very plain to them - told them ~~as long as they showed themselves ladies,~~ they would be treated as such, but if they condescended to anything as low again or repeated the offence - they would be treated accordingly. Probably this will not interest you much: but I think it demands some explanation, the girls said at the commencement of the school (to a lady in the place) that if any one visited ~~the~~ the school or scholars, they would treat them well; - but if they visited the "Teacher" they would do as they pleased. and I think they meant to do so - for the Saturday following there was six gentlemen & ladies visited the school & they done exceedingly well. This affair has been of no disadvantage to me - as it aroused my energy and interest; I fear that I was becoming too indifferent in school.

I received a letter from Julia M. yesterday she said they were well Mary has gone to Buffalo to spend the winter, Carrie to Albany. it seems some lonesome here I have come to stay a few days or a week; while they repair the School House. Orland you may think by my writing, that I regard the subject you spoke of little importance, to put it off till the last. if so - you are mistaken - I have been thinking today: my mind has gone back to the time when I first met you: it was then you made an impression on my heart, which time and acquaintance have only deepened; and in view of past enjoyment, and future happiness can I be indifferent to your proposal? O - you may have my likeness; and the "other" which you spoke of - if you desire it above all others. I ask a return of affection without which - I never could bestow mine. Can you not find from your circle of acquaintances, some one who is more capable of contributing to your happiness than myself? If you can not - I shall be happy to claim you as my protector, advisor and dearest friend - if you prefer some one else more: I will ever be your friend and well wisher: - but no more. I have been to one Free Methodist meeting since you was here, it was a loud one too. They dedicate their Church New Year's eve they expect very smart ministers from abroad to be present. Oh! how I wish you could our so as to attend: Please do come if you do not start to C - before then. This will probably reach you about Christmas: I wish you a merry one, I shall be obliged stopp writing - for it is getting near midnight & I fear (over)

(cont.)

you can not read what I have written. please answer this
very soon.

Truly & sincerely yours

Emma

1862
Govanda, May 6/62

Dear Orlando:

This Tuesday eve finds me at home- endeavoring to compose & controll my mind enough to write a few thoughts: for a substitute of an answer to your letter, dated the 14th of March, and received last week. You may wonder at what I have written above but I think you will not, when I tell you that I have been up late every night, & sometimes all night for three weeks; with my Mother, who has been very sick for seven or eight weeks: I was at Cattar- angus at the time she was taken- she became so very low- she could scarcely speak or realize any thing that occurred- that it alarmed my folks so much- they sent for me, and also the others of the family that was absent. She is now a little better- but not out of danger. In the first place she had an attack of the Rheumatism: which was broken up too violently- and consequently Algor Fever set in, and after that had to run its course: congestion of the Lungs was pronounced next to be the difficulty, and that she is suffering from now: and we fear unless she has help soon it will lead to consumption: you doubtless think I have written quite a catalogue of diseases: for one person to be afflicted with- but this the statement of the Physicians that attend her.) Rugg & Johnson) you probably know the skill of the latter- and as for the former- if he continues to call I fear he will make me sick, he is so disagreeable:- I guess I will change the subject- "or I can not write any thing else". I have not been to Dayton yet, but I am going soon as I can leave home: Julia M. was here about a week ago, I had a pleasant chat with her she did not relate any news in particular, more than they have got a new boat- which rather indicates we shall have lively times when I do go. Dear Orlando, you may judge by your own feelings whether it give

me any pleasure to get a letter from you or not: do, write more frequent- if possible: it seems like an age from the time I get a letter from you before I get another: you may think me too exacting- if so, please pardon this fault of selfishness; I do not wish to too much upon your time or attention, but I am so glad to hear from you. Oh! how I wish you could be at Dayton to row our boat for us: would it not be delightful? I am nearly alone at home now, there is only one of the girls here- not quite alone either for the house is thronged constantly with callers to see and inquire about mother Carrie is yet at Albany expects to remain until June. I understood that the said Mike (spoken of here-to-fore-) had written a letter to her- I would like to take a peep at her face as she reads it. He has been very inquisitive in regard to me and my affairs- but I guess he has directed or rather inflicted his attention elsewhere, of late:- I hope he will succeed- "for I can not take his school". By the description you gave of Cal. I should judge it must be quite a novelty to you- who have been accustomed to see forests, and hills instead of mountains. It is cold this spring here, vegetation is very backward, there is scarcely a green blade of grass to be seen on the ground. I will send that likeness- soon as I receive yours- which I hope will be soon. Please excuse this very poorly written letter- I have been writing what was uppermost in my mind without regard to order or arrangement: I do not dare to read it over, for fear I shall be obliged by observing the many mistakes to write it over. Do write very soon and often, and by doing so oblige

E. C. Bassett.

Gowanda, July 2/62

Dear Orlando:

It is a lovely evening. I have just returned from a walk which I have enjoyed exceedingly; the moon shines very brightly- almost equal to the light of day:- it reminds me of the evening a long time ago, when we met at Mr. Darts down in the dutch settlement: doubtless you remember it- it was later in the season then- than it is now: many times has my mind wandered back to the forgotten past- and memory serves to re-enjoy the happy hours I have spent in your society: it also extends in anticipation to the future- to the time when we shall meet- to be no more separated by the distance which now intervenes between us: but perhaps I am looking forward to the future with hopes that the present may never realize but I will leave it in the hands of providence whom I believe controls the wills and destinys of men (not excluding women)- not by depriving us of our free agency:- but by relying on divine promises- he will direct us: and permit all things to result in good to them that obey his commandments.

My health is very good this summer it never was better, and wish this to find you well and happy. In one of your letters you stated that you "thought me too lovely to prove false". I fear you estimate too highly the qualities that I possess. I have faults, which no doubt you have seen: but in regard to the promise I made you; I consider it too sacred to be trifled with. I have been to Dayton as intended, since I wrote to you last. It is now about eleven o'clock and I shall be obliged to lay aside my writing until another time. It is now one day later and not writing all I wanted to yesterday again I resume writing. I found the folks well as usual, but a few

changes or improvements. I called to most all of the places in the district excepting on the hill- which I had no time for: I staid four days. I met Mr. Edwards to Julia's- "and report says" that he pays her steady attention- and probably will make a union. I think she esteems him higher than formally: if I am allowed to judge by appearances. I would like to tell you of a few things that occurred while I was there- time and space will not allow me to do so at present. I received a letter last night from my sister Carrie stating that she would be at home this week- she has graduated- after many hopes and fears- with honors. I leave home next week for Evans- or I expect to now: a friend of mine wishes me to spend the summer with her or stay awhile to help her, it is a delightful place and I think I shall be contented and happy there, or at least as happy as I can be without your society. Please continue to direct your letters to Gowanda: and do please write very often. We have company today- I have stole away from them to finish my letter- they will wonder at my long absence therefore I shall be obliged to stopp writing.

From your well wisher

Emma

San Pablo Creek July 27th/ 62

Dearest Emma

Having just returned home after two weeks absence I cheerfully improve this first opportunity (since I last wrote) of writing to you. It is now five weeks since I rec your letter & I feel greatly concerned about you Emma: in regard to your health. When you last wrote to me (the last letter I rec I mean) you were having rather of a hard time of it & I shall wait very impatiently to hear from you Dear Emma: & hope to hear that you are well & enjoying yourself. My health is very good this summer & as that old saying is I am as tough as an Injin. I have been to work with a reaping machine for two weeks past & I expect to go with threshing machine with the same man for fifty two Dollars per month. You remember I wrote you and that I had the mining fever. I've got all over that now Emma: I believe the Irishmans adage: That fair & aisy goes far in a day: I have seen so many poor miners & heard them tell such discouraging stories that I don't believe I shall ever go to the mines with the intention of mining. When I was in the States & heard them tell about taking out five Dollars worth of dust in a day I thought men could not help but do well. but Emma: that is all humbug. 5.00 Dollars per day in the mines don't pay in such places. Flour is from 50¢ to one Dollar per pound, Bacon from one Dollar to one fifty, Butter from one Dollar to two & other prices to correspond. I think cheese minings about the best mining in Cal. as that article is in good demand at from 22 to 25 cts per lb. We have now on hand about 140 good cheese which we intend to keep until fall

There was great rejoicing here when the news was recieved that the Pacific Rail Road bill had passed Congress they fired an hundred guns over at the Fort & had a grand turn out in the City in the evenings

Last Wensday 300 Prisoners escaped from the States Prison at San Joaquin 200 wer captured again after a desperate fight in which 10 wer killed & 15 wounded (of the Prisoners) 100 escaped taking with them the Warden of the Prison they took possession of a Boat in the Harbor & kept the Soldiers from firing on them by keeping the Warden in front of them or between them & the Soldiers they soon landed however & took to the Mountains stealing Horses & robbing Houses on the way they finally let the Warden go & he returned: rather the worse for wear: for he was considerably cut to pieces with knives by his captors.

I dont know when I shall have another oportunity to write to you but rest assured Dear Emma: I will improve the first that offers its self I will write again in 2 weeks if possible but do not fail to write Dear if I do. You are very Dear to me Emma & it gives me great pleasure to peruse youre letters they afford me many happy hours & supply me with agreeable company

Please put youre : Specstickles: and read what you can of this Emma & write immediately

Yours Truly

Orlando

Evans Aug. 12./62.

Dear Orlando,

Again, after several previous attempts, I will endeavor to write hoping at this time, to be more succesful than heretofore. I am very weary after the labors of the day; but your letter I must reply to, (or rather your letters for I have received two from you since I have written): the last dated July 4th, received about a week ago.

It gave me inexpressible joy to receive a line written by your hand, proceeding I trust from your heart, which I assure you reached mine. I am stopping at Mr. James Ayer's at Evans: have been here four weeks today, it is a very pleasant place here- I am in good health and excelent spirits, there is much here to promote both- although I feel many times as if I performed more than I ought- for to retain my health; last week I was alone that is with no one to help me. Mrs. Ayre is dead- she, died last winter, and dying she wished a Mrs. Merritt who keeps house) when she is here) & a friend of mine, to promise her to stay here and take care of her children, when she was gone- and she is here- but needed help, and company, therefore she urged me to come and stay with her awhile: but I think she has improved the opportunity well for she has been away much of the time, Mr. Ayre works three hundred acres of land and you may judge by that whether we have any thing to do in the house, as well as out doors. I have no leasure except that which I take from my sleeping hours- which of late have been few enough. Oh! Orlando I must tell you of one occurance- which I know will amuse you exceedingly- for it did me: there is a German, who has resided in Mr. Ayres family nine years; he is very industrious and deeply pious- but very raw, with all that- who soon after I came here manifested a great interes in my behalf-

he was an extreme critic in all kinds of housework; but he found no fault with me: every thing he said- was done just right- one evening I was surprised by his returning from Church earlier than usual)the folks all being gone but me) he came in- in a buisness sort of a way and without any ceremony asked me to Mary him- It come so unexpected, I was confounded & amused, I hardly knew how to answer him- so I finally hit upon this- that I would treat the matter very seriously to all appearance: so I told him that was not so good as he was- therefore he had better excuse me- he replied "that I was as better as he," which amused me so much I could not refrain from bursting out laughing: which he took a slight offence at, and called me a sinner several days afterward but he could not retain his anger very long for in a short time afterward he repeated his proposal: but this time I gave him an answer so decided- he gave up the matter and resolved to go immediately to war- he therefore enlisted under Captain Ayre)brother of J. Ayre) in a company of about thirty who went to Buffalo, yesterday, after examination he returned home, was not accepted, I asked why- he said because he was "short-sighted". I thought how very unfortunate it is to be "short sighted. Continued on the next half sheet

San Pablo Creek Aug. 23rd/, 62

Dear Emma:

I recd your letter dated June 26th last Saturday (16th)
The Likeness was all right with a single exception-it is not quite
so good looking as the Ooriginal- I had began to get quiet uneasy
about you Emma: as it was the only letter recd from you in over two
months. But in looking at the date I perceive it had been almost two
months in coming. You wished me to be frank with you Emma: in regard
to what my Parents think about youre entering their family
I will be frank Emma: and hope you will be the sane without the least
restraint. My utmost confidence is placed in you Emma: and my mind
contains not a secret that I would not impart to you. Being an only
child my Parents are particularly anxious I remain with them under all
such consideration I will go into partnership
with my Father and it is our present intention to carry on an ex-
tensive dairying business next season. Should we act according to
our present meditation it will be nessary for me to live somewhere near
if not with them, and I have not come to any conclusion yet where to
live after we are married, & shall be happy to be governed entirely by
your wishes in this respect. As for their thinking it a presumptuous
idea for you to come to Cal under the circumstances: I assure you dear
Emma: they do not but on the contrary are pleased with the idea & will
be happy to welcome you with the best their humble cot affords. Those
who wish me well must you or they are no friends or well wishers of
mine.

Your friends if consulted will undoubtedly endeavor to
discourage you from coming, & picture out the great danger of a sea
vorage. They may think it absurd for a Single Lady to travel so far

alone in so doing they think (if not speak) through ignorance not experience Your rights will be better maintained on board a Cal steamer than in the most thorough Town in Ch.G. Should a man insult a Lady in any way on board a Cal Steamer I will warrant he would be put in irons forthwith on complaint being made to the Capt. It may seem like a long & tedious journey but I tell you & tell you truly Emma: that I had rather come from Ch.G. City to San Fransisco than from Buffalo to N.Y.

I dont know but I am asking to much Emma..when I ask you to come to Cal. but this State can never be a home for me without you therefore I hop you will be as frank with me as I have endeavored to be with you. I dont know but I have spoken rather too plainly if so pleas pardon wont you dear Emma!

I was greatly surprised the other day on the receipt of a letter with ~~bottom~~ ? ~~bottom~~ he informed me they had a Boy at their house 8 weeks old I suppose if it had not been for the Boy he would not ans.d my letter at all for that was all the news he disclosed I hope when you return from Dayton you will tell me all the mischief that has been going on there since I left. I have not ans. Julias letter yet Emma but will one of these days when I get time.

I had almost forgotten to tell you about the ride I had last sunday with 5 or 6 of my friends we started from here & went down to San Pablo visited the San Pablo Garden some fine fruit & drove from that place down the Bay to Oakland took dinner at Oakland & returned Home again by way of San Pablo making a nice ride of about 40 miles over one of the most beautiful section of country in the world. I must now close for the want of room to write & hope soon to hear from you & youre pleasant time up to Dayton

Truly yours

Orlando

San Pablo Creek

Oct. 10th/62

Dear Emma:

Again I find myself endeavoring to convey my scattered thoughts to you through the medium of my pen. Your kind & welcome letter bearing date Aug 31st was recvd day before yesterday (wensday) The war excitement of which you spoke I suppose exists throughout York State it is quite different in this State there is little or no excitement at all at present. But very little enlistings is going on and those that do enlist in Cal will never get into the south to fight. they will be kept at home fighting the Indians

I dont think there is much danger of my going to the wars and leave my Harp on a willow tree! so long as America is against America: but should any foreign Nation interfere I should not hesitate long but off to the war at once. You may think Emma that my patriotism needs arrousing I think it will need a great shake to arrouse my patriotism sufficient to go South to fight. Do not think by this dear Emma : that I am on the cessish principal for I assure you I am strong for the Union: at the same time I think this war could have been settled had it not been for a few political demagogues at Washington It wont do for me to argue the Union question much here. there is a young Cessesh by my side at this moment.

I suppose the disagreeable fall wether has already set in whare you are but the day here is verely warm the thermometer stands at 90° in the shade We wer favored with a shower the other day which came near laying the dust but not quite, with this exception I have not seen any rain since May or June. The leaves are begining to fall here & they do look so odd some turn a little yellow others look kind of dead & other leavs falloff looking as green as they did in the Spring Some of the poison Oak leaves look just as the leaves do in the States when they fall off. Take it all in all this is a queer old State inhabited all kinds of people most of whoom are well educated with the exception of the Chinees slaves they are a hard old set so are the Spaniards some of the latter would cut a mans throat for five dollars.

That Cousin I told you about some time ago has been drafted & has gone to war consequently you will not be favored with his company if you come to Cal dont let that discourage you Emma: for you will find plenty company. Has any of our Dayton Friend or acquaintances been disabled? As it is getting late in the day I shal be compelled to close Hoping to hear from you soon

I remain

Truly Yours

Orlando

1862

San Pablo Creek Oct 24th/62

Dear Emma:

Again I find the time at hand which says to me that it is time to again convey a few scattered thoughts to you through the medium of my pen, also to acknowledge the receipt of your kind and interesting letter bearing date of Sep 21st. It gives me great pleasure to learn that you are willing to sacrifice home and its endearments to share another so humble & with one so unworthy. But it is not the Palace which affords the most happiness although it may comfort

? People may talk to their hearts content about you coming, Emma: it wont amount to anything after they get through & if they dont keep truth on their side the worst is their own. Remember Emma: that those who condescend to falsehood are no friends but pretended ones whose opinions are not worth courting. For fear you may think like many others that come to Cal that we have no cold weather here consequently; bring nothing but summer clothing I will nearly say you will find considerable cold wind here winters therefore winter clothing will not come amiss. I presume you will never see so cold weather in this State as you are having at home at this present time but it will effect you more the day here is very pleasant and warm the Thermometer stands at 70° in the shade. The ground is as dry as a bone & the wild roses continue to bud and blow as though it was only spring & the present symptoms indicate fair weather for at least a month yet

I am having comparatively easy time just now only 5 or 6 cows to milk and those only once a day. I expect to commence riding next week and continue until the rains set in for we have got about 150 head of Stock running at large on the mountains which we must get home before winter As I have not got room enough on this sheet to give you the necessary directions about coming to Cal I will dedicate a whole letter to it

before long. I should like to know what you & Mrs. D & Jule fel out about I was not the least surprised to learn that you had I have known those two ladies for some time and think I know them as well as they know themselves: I could tell you some tough zaines about them which everyone dont know I have got a letter in my trunk which I wrote you some time ago and did not send for fear of creating hardness between you & them I will show you the letter some time that you may know what my opinion has been of them for some time although I kept my opinion to myself I will nearly say you have no need to mourn the look of their pretended friendship. As thare is not another blank side to this sheet of paper I must close the drama, hoping these few lines will find you well & happy.

I remain Truly Yours

Orlando

Nov 3rd 1862

Dear Friend

Yours of Oct 6th was not received by me till Thursday of last week. The reason was you directed your letter to Maderia & as we live in another neighborhood we have changed our Post Office address I can assure you that I was very glad to hear from you & I had began to think you rather tardy about writing.

You are deserving of a good husband & think you will be depriving yourself of considerable to leave home & friends & go so far away & Eneline I can't take no for an answer but what you will come & see me before you leave York State. You must not think that if you marry that you are out of trouble for I think if you get one of the kindest of husbands that you will more care & trouble than you now have for you'll have two to please instead of one. Yet still if two agrees well & tries to please each other a married life is much more pleasant one than a single life & you know if given notions are born & brought up in a person that marriage is not going to remove it.

You spoke about your marrying & ask my advice. I do not call myself a good adviser but will say that you may better by far marry a man that has a good intellect if he has a good heart & willing hand than to marry riches without intellect but remember & "marry in haste & repent at leisure". Try & be well enough acquainted to know that he is a person of good habits for I think that

Well Em I must confess I was somewhat amused at the contents of your letter

Why should you think that I am quite an old lady I feel as young as ever & I griefs look like the same old sixpence. When I look at our little girl now past four years old it does not seem possible that she is mine, but so it is. & Em you spoke of yourself

as being an "old maid", that some despise those that are such but I cannot say that I do. There are some crusty & curious old maids so also there are some great married persons

Well I have written this over & what does it amount too
We are in usual health. Mother & Betsey are here, have not heard from Frank in some time- she has lost one of her little girls.

Write soon

Martha & G

Evans. Nov. 15/62

My Dear Orlando,

I am exceedingly glad to have the opportunity to write to you. I rec'd your letter of date Sept. 26 and also one of more recent date (Oct. 10) they afforded me much pleasure--yet I thought they seemed cold:--perhaps it was my imagination, or owing to my own warmth of feelings at the time I rec'd them. I am willing to have you share in the joys and secrets of my heart, this is why I write this: Your image is engraven on my heart, and neither time, distance nor circumstances; can efface it, & it will remain there as long as time lasts: I have friends whom I respect, for their kindness to me--but the affections of my heart are undivided. Today is the sabbath, I have been to Church & heard Mr Heney (from Jamestown) preach a very interesting sermon: he is holding a protracted meeting here: and many have been converted; and a general interest & solemnity prevails all about here, on the subject of religion: I hope the good impressions made on their minds & hearts--will show its effects on their lives & acts. Mr H's sermons are not what you would call great--but they are good, I think they come from the heart & they can not fail to reach the heart. He reminds me of our Savior every time I hear him speak or look at him: he is so patient & kind I am still stopping at Mr Ayers but intend to go home in a few days: My health is very good so that I need but little time to rest: and by the time you set for me to start: I shall be in readiness: I come relying on you for my future safety and happiness--trusting and believing that you will ever be faithful to the charge, and I am willing to commit myself in truth & love to be true to you. I do not think I

can receive an answer from this before I go--yet your extra reminder in traveling--to me would be very important, You spoke of enjoying the society of your friend from C. I was pleased to hear that you was having a good time--but is not the sport you referred to dangerous? You spoke of the war--your sentiments are similar to mine in regard to it. I would like to say much about it but time and space forbids--yet I'll say here I should be unwilling for a friend of mine to enlist--Some of the Dayton boys have gone Calvin Johnson and his brother Giles after marrying Miss Cole. Filo Markham & Erthina Markham's husband, a stranger to me I do not know what his name is. Mr Ayer wrote for me to use my influence in enlisting a dozen good young men to fill out his Company which has been stopping in Baltimore. I think he has overrated my influence--and even if it was sufficient, I should be unwilling to do so. It is getting late I have not exhausted my thoughts but I have nearly my paper: I will write again when I get home.

Emma

I thank you very much for your punctuality in writing I can always find time to read letters, if I cant to write them.

Good night dear Orlando.

E.

1862
Gowanda, Dec 5./62

Dear Orlando:

I am obliged to begin writing with an apology for my seeming negligence, in replying to your letter as well as my promise to write soon as I got home: I have had much to demand my attention & occupy my time: but I regard it more of a pleasure, than a task to write to those I love; and kindly regard--which you may doubt--by my giving the preference to other things I came home last week--on tuesday--I regretted very much to leave Evans--it has afforded many pleasant hours to me--and I have formed some new and worthy acquaintances--which I shall ever hold dear. I spent more time there than I intended--from the fact I could hardly get away--so strongly I was urged to remain: they saw no necessity in my going home they said--but every one knows their own affairs best--and I always ? to mine. I would like to tell you all about some good jokes, and other things which occurred while I was in Evans--I think you would enjoy their recital as much as we did, that participated in the fun: I will tell you some future time. My health is good--and I believe I am happy--as I can be--I have many things to promote my happiness, a few things--that are detrimental to it. I thank you for your well wishes--in my behalf, and I will return them doubly, You wondered what could have occurred to have broken the friendship of Mrs. D. & Julia & I, there never was any very strong bonds uniting us: I always doubted then they can not be, they are not capable of being a true friend to any one, yet I never before last summer considered them so mean as to tell an actual falsehood--I wrote to J a short time ago accusing her of

it--I told her that I did not fear her influence for I had learned from those who was better acquainted than I, that she had none: I told her she had extended her hospitality to me, many times--and that I very much regretted that I had accepted it--and that she had also many times helped me to while away time--which would have been more profitably spent alone: I wrote a sheet like this full just after this stile: I do not like to write such letters--but I can if it is necessary: in difenc of my rights--As you have been confidential in relation to your affairs: I will endeavor to be--and not withhold that confidence which might create anxious thoughts in your heart--Well! to begin Mr. E--was as I told you once before very much interested in two members of our family. one Carrie the other myself--and when I was to Dayton he came to Mr. Markhams, and we went over to Mr Darts,--all of us, and in the evening returned to J's--great to my surprise he showed a decided preferance to me:--sayd to J. to excuse him--he would like to speak with me of course I had some curiosity--yet I told him I had nothing to say but what I could say in the presence of Miss M.--yet she took an offence and retired: I desired to do so, but curiosity prompted me to hear what he had to say: it was this, saying that he never should marry J. that he did not love her: he tried to appeal to my sympathy--but he found me indifent on the subject--"taking his own words for it" then he turned his attention to Carrie told me how much he thought of her . I did not discourage him--I thought he might speak to her himself--and he would be better satisfied--and I think he is now: at least he can not alter the matter: it seems that J. & Mrs. D. was let into the secret which Mike says J. listened and overheard what we said: as far as I was concerned I did not care but it was very humiliating to J. to hear what she did no doubt in

result--Jule told that we set up in the dark--after burning out all of the candle and a great lot besides which Mike took the liberty to tell me about--in reply I told him I did not any longer want Jules society, nor her associates, /on the other) and he has taken it for granted that I alluded to him: he sees the girls some times, and wonders to them what has offended me: that I have not answered his letter . Now I do not wish to treat any body lightly, I wish to respect them always and every body; if they are worthy of it--his previous history looks dark by what I have heard, yet I can say he has been always very respectful to me; yet I dislike him, and I do not want his company: he thinks I spend the winter in Evans, and probably will not call at our house to see me while I am at home. I would like to see his countenance at hearing that I have gone to Cal. for he is no friend to you--he does not know that I correspond with you--but he thinks I do with some one, I have heard, he said but enough of this--I have wearied you already to much with such nonsense: and will change the subject. I received a very interesting letter a short time ago from Mr Ayer, he concideres me one of his family, I have spent so much time there--he is certainly worthy of the greatest respect--he is a friend who I can remember with kindness for past favors More recently, I received a letter from Evans stating that his ? had resigned & come home he stated that Mr Ayer was coming also, home: it is quite singular I can hardly credit it: by the way I have stretched this letter you may think, I have an inexhaustt fountain of nonsense but I assure you I have written about all I can for several reasons. You gave me some excelent hints in regard to clothing, I hope you will feel at perfect liberty to suggest any thing you think best,

From your friend, Emma

Please excuse all mistakes, I do not mean on this page in particular--but wait till you get the six pages all read. E.

If you do not call this letter systematic, I shall not try to be so again, Carrie sends her kind regards to you, she is teaching on the hill right above the ? , we have good times.

The Free Methodist are holding a protracted meeting it is superior in loudness, that is all.

Do continue to write as often and as long as you can, and I will reply accordingly. E.

Gowanda. Dec. 14/ 62.

Dear Orlando:

With pleasure, I avail myself, of the present opportunity, to reply to your letter mailed Nov. 17th and rec'd a day before yesterday: which contained many profitable lessons of wisdom, as well as, sources of happiness: which I very gratefully acknowledge: the timely hints, and necessary directions, expressed--if properly regarded (which I shall endeavor to do) will doubtless be a safe guide in the proposed journey.

It is a dark and rainy day; the ground which has been sufficiently covered with snow, to make good sleighing: has nearly disappeared; leaving quite a depth of mud on the ground, which indicates more, unless more snow falls, or the ground becomes frozen: the last few days, the weather has been unusually warm, for this time of the year. My health is very good, I am waiting for the anticipated journey, which I was glad you deferred, for several reasons Miss Julie Markham, called on me yesterday: she did not relate any startling news, except, that Mrs. E. Johnson had become a very desperate character, and was about to marry a man of very low reputation) named Butcher, if I am not mistaken.) It is sad, for me to think, that one who possesses so kind a heart, should disregard their own happiness, and honor, so much, as to pursue such a course: I have heretofore believed her to be virtuous--notwithstanding the reports to the contrary: I do not rely entirely on Julie's opinion; I have heard about the same report from Mrs. J's friend, who would like to believe otherwise of her if they could consistently. Julie--inquired if I had heard from Cal. of late--referring to you I presume as she received no satisfaction from me and I thought best to drop the subject

I have not seen Mick, since I came home, but I had an occasion last to be somewhat amused: a lady near where we live told me, that a gentleman told her, that I was going to be married very soon, to the said "Mike", he thought it was too bad: and if he thought I would not be offended--he would tell me, just what kind of a fellow he is: so you see I am not entirely minus of friends. You referred to the "War Meeting of long ago," about J being disappointed in going . I must say, I hope C will atton so fully, for the past, that she will be constrained to freely pardon him, and receive him for her future portio ? I received a letter from Evans last night stating that the report was wrong James Ayer was coming home: his ? unwilling to part with him: but the Col. advised him to resign: Probably fearing he might be deprived of his own position if Mr A. remained. It is getting late in the evening--and by glancing over what I have written, that it will not pay to spend any more time on this--I presume you will conclude so too that I have exhausted all of my ideas if this contains any thing that is worthy of the name; pleas receive this as a substitute of a letter, and I will try to do better next time. Good Night

Yours affectionately,

Emma.

Carrie sends her kind regards, told me something to write about Mike--but I have forgotten what it was.

1862

Unreadable

Emma

alessedness went

Unreadable

agression will

they Emma.

and as for a journey to Cal why its noth

all when you are once started. The sights which I saw paid me
for all trouble & expence) It would take 2 sheets of fools cap paper
to tell you all that has transpired since I left . .

I had more trouble & run greater risks & was to more expense travel-
ing 8 miles after I landed at Oakland than I was in coming from Colden
to San Francisco, it only cost me ten Dollars for 2 Horses to ride
that 8 miles you probbably think as I did Emma but after going over
the road I thought it very cheap. I should charge a man the full
value

Unreadable

usand miles ap

something unforess happens

willing I will make the nessesary arrangements for you to
come to Cal by next Jan I would put the time sooner but I think Ja
the best time for crossing the water & by the time I can get settled
& get a start so that we can enjoy ourselves quite comfetably I think,
the limited knowled I have of Cal that you would be well pleased with
the country & prospects to be shure it looks rather hard just now to
me but I am not at all discouraged. Since you have placed confidence
enough in me Emma to risk you

Unreadable

from 75 to 80

Unreadable

Wood from 8 to

22 Dollars per Thousand

Unreadable

We have just

comenced making Butter and commence making cheese next week

Oh Emma I wish you wer here we would have a gay old time riding over

these hills but never mind I'll have a good Horse for you when you do come Emma for I have got a fine American colt right up there on the Mountain You may think there aint any mountains here Emma but if one was to blind their eyes with a handkerchief they could see mountains but not like the hills of York State these are smooth & not timbered timbered land is scarce in this section

I do call it the prettiest country that I ever saw & the climate is most splendid why Emma although it is Winter here now you could sit out door in the shade & be comfortable from morn till night

me I think that Unreadable the best
as I have found Unreadable a bad State. The flood
of last fall has Unreadable ing in its way you know but verry
little of the havoc made here by the flood it is calculated that
about $\frac{1}{4}$ of the property of the State of Cal. has been distroid. Cattle
are dying off by the Thousand from actual starvation One man went
into San Francisco last week with 2000 hides that he had taken off
his own cattle that had died from starvation We have not lost any
cattle as yet and if we can save 25 out of 32 we shal consider our
selves luckey Last night we had a severe frost & should such cold
nights continue for one week longer I dont think there would be 50
head of cattle left in this Co.

& then I shal beat Unreadable just told me that the cows
stock yard therefore I shal have to My little dog spot
& a club or two & protect the Hay stock
Well Emma Ive got the Cows out & milked & those that wer in the stock
pen I chastised most severely. I will endeavor in my next to give

you a description of the country in this vicinity & a minute description of the events which came to my notice during my travels from N. . City to my present stopping place which is a most romantic place I assure you Pleas give my respects to your Father and Mother also remember me to youre Sisters & write soon & often Thus & I will endeavor to write something more interesting hereafter

Truly Yours

Orlando

Lafayette

Contra Costa

Cal

WELLS, FARGO & CO.

PAID

Mr. J. B. Russell
Esq.
St. Louis

For
Overland

200

Jan 24 1863

Wells Fargo & Co.
San Francisco

Exchange for third unpaid pay
of this twenty dollar draft
to the order of Mrs. E. B. Russell

When received and charge the same to account
of Wells Fargo & Co.
New York
24 Broadway



\$200. DRAFT SENT TO EMMELINE BASSETT IN NEW YORK STATE BY
 OVERLAND WELLS-FARGO EXPRESS, JAN. 24, 1863, FROM ORLANDO HOUGH
 IN LAFAYETTE FOR HER PASSAGE VIA PANAMA TO CALIFORNIA WHERE THEY
 WERE TO BE MARRIED.